awareness programmes for drivers and maintenance staff of CNG buses are being conducted on a regular basis by IGL. Auto LPG can be used only in vehicle having permanently fitted auto LPG tank. This tank is designed to Indian Standard Specification No. IS: 14899 and has all the safety features including safety relief valve, excess flow check valve and fusible plug. There have been no report relating to bursting of fixed auto LPG tank or CNG cylinder conforming to laid down specifications in any approved vehicle in the recent past.

Competition between ONGC and Chinese companies

694. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minsiter of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the stiff competition between ONGC Videsh and the Chinese Oil Companies for acquiring oil equity abroad is proving to be a costly affair for the two Asian neighbours;

(b) the oil experts are of the view that if the Chinese Oil Companies, spearheaded by CNPC, join hands with ONGC Videsh they will be able to strike better deals; and

(c) if so, the stand of Government on the above suggestion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Generaliy, mutually beneficial collaboration between oil companies is always a welcome step. ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) is pursuing acquisition of 25% stake in the Grater Nile Oil Project in Sudan, where the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) of China is also a consortium partner, which may lead to cooperation between OVL and the Chinese and other international companies in future.

Protection to CNG Stations from rain

†695. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared on 30th June, 2002 in the 'Rashtriya Sahara' under the caption "Barish se kai CNG Station kee mechinain Kharab, Eendhan ka tota";

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the number of CNG Stations Affected in the Delhi due to rain;

(c) the steps taken by Government to protect these machines of CNG Stations in the rainy seasons in future; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Because of heavy rains on 28th May, 2002 there were wide spread power failures resulting in non functioning of 12 CNG stations ranging from 1 to 12 hours.

(c) and (d) 30 generator sets of different capacities have been put in the CNG stations to enable the CNG compressors to operate in the event of grid power failure.

Oil wells in Andhra Pradesh

696. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC has drilled exploratory oil wells and also undertook development of oil wells in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, year-wise and district-wise; and

(c) what will be the estimated crude production from these wells?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) During the last three year (1999-2002), Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has drilled 61 exploratory and 16 development wells in the State